

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KABUL 03416 011305Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00
ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 A-01 AID-05 CCO-00 HA-05 OC-06 OMB-01
OPR-02 CA-01 MCT-01 SCS-06 SY-05 USSS-00 PC-01
ACDA-12 EUR-12 EB-08 WRDE-00 PPT-01 FAA-00 DOTE-00
AF-10 /125 W

-----123323 011310Z /46

O P 011205Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7707
SECDEF
DIRNSA, FT MEADE, MD
CINCPAC
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

ISLAMABAD, NEW DELHI, TEHRAN ALSO FOR USDAOs

SITREP 21

E. O. 11652: NA
TAGS: ASEC, PINS, AF
SUBJECT: MILITARY CONFLICT IN KABUL

1. AS OF 1600 HOURS, THE NEW REGIME'S FIRST MAY DAY HOLIDAY HAS BEEN REMARKABLY QUIET, AND FREE, SO FAR, FROM ANY DEMONSTRATIONS OR PARADES WHICH USUALLY CHARACTERIZE THIS DATE IN OTHER COMMUNIST COUNTRIES. THE TROOPS REMAIN IN FULL CONTROL OF THE SITUATION, AND THEIR DISCIPLINE REMAINS EXTREMELY TIGHT.

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THOUSANDS OF AFGHAN "TOURISTS" FROM KABUL'S OLD CITY ARE FLOCKING INTO AND AROUND THE PALACE GROUNDS IN ORDER TO GET A GLIMPSE OF A PREVIOUSLY OFF-LIMITS AREA WHERE VIRTUALLY NONE OF THEM HAVE EVER BEEN BEFORE. THEY ARE ALSO TAKING A LOOK AT THE MIDDLE AND UPPER CLASS AREAS OF KABUL NEAR THE PALACE, AREAS WHICH ARE RARELY VISITED BY THESE RESIDENTS OF OLD TOWN. NEWSPAPERS HAVE NOT YET APPEARED, AND RADIO AFGHANISTAN CONTINUES

TO CONCENTRATE ON MUSIC, SOME WORLD NEWS, AND INTERMITTENT ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE NEW REGIME.

2. MOST OF THE PEDESTRIANS AROUND THE CITY ARE WORKING CLASS; THE MIDDLE AND UPPER CLASSES ARE NOTABLY ABSENT FROM THE STREETS, AND ARE PRESUMABLY LYING LOW IN THEIR HOMES. IN THIS REGARD, WE HAVE HEARD THAT SOME MEMBERS OF THE MOHAMMADZAI CLAN ARE OPTIMISTIC THAT THE REGIME'S VIOLENCE HAS SPENT ITSELF AGAINST THE FAMILIES OF DAOUD AND NAIM, AND THAT THE OTHER FAMILIES WILL NOT BE HARMED. MOST MEMBERS OF THE CLAN, HOWEVER, ARE EXTREMELY FEARFUL FOR THEIR OWN SAFETY, AND SOME HAVE EITHER FLED OR ARE PREPARING TO LEAVE AFGHANISTAN IF AT ALL POSSIBLE.

3. FOR ITS OWN REASONS, THE NEW REGIME HAS OPENED THE PALACE GROUNDS TO THE PUBLIC, AND THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE ARE TAKING A WALKING TOUR OF THE SCENE OF SUCH VIOLENT FIGHTING A FEW DAYS AGO. THE CROWDS ARE EXTREMELY ORDERLY, AND APPEAR IN A SUBDUED HOLIDAY MOOD. UNIFORMED OFFICERS, AS WELL AS SOME YOUTHFUL CIVILIANS, HAVE BEEN OBSERVED EXPLAINING TO THE CROWD WHAT HAPPENED AND WHY DAOUD DESERVED HIS FATE. SEVERAL BLOOD-STAINED CARPETS ARE BEING DISPLAYED ON THE LAWN IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE IN WHICH DAOUD AND MANY OF HIS FAMILY REPORTEDLY DIED.

4. WE HAVE BEEN INFORMED THAT THE AIRPORT IS OPEN, BUT THAT AN EXACT TIME FOR INITIATING OPERATIONS IS NOT YET AVAILABLE.
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STATUS OF THE BORDERS REMAINS UNCLEAR. WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO ARRANGE THE DEPARTURE OF ALL AMERICANS WHO WISH TO LEAVE KABUL.
ELIOT

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